FTA NEWS

FOOD, TOBACCO, AGRICULTURAL AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA—CIO

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TELL YOUR NEIGHBOR!

Be a Good Citizen—
GIVE TO PAC!

FROM WASHINGTON

ATTACK ON LABOR, FARMERS

By ELIZABETH SASULY

The old Romans tried to fix things up by giving the people "bread and circuses." Congress has been taking the bread out of our mouths and the committee hearings it has been substituting for circuses don't exactly fill the bill.

A couple of days ago a subcommittee of the House Labor Committee moved into the Chamber of Commerce Board Room in San Francisco with lots of noise and an announcement that they were here to ferret out the "labor racketeering" in "farm labor unions," which was supposed to be hurting California farmers. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that chairman Wint Smith (R., Kansas) admitted that he had "encountered no evidence of labor racketeering as far as the farm labor unions were concerned."

What went on in between these two statements? The committee did its best to find what it was looking for. It issued an invitation to that old friend of the farmers, J. Paul St. Sure, lawyer for California canners who gyp the farmers every chance they get.

It gave Robert F. Schmeiser, president of the Associated Farmers, the run of the hearing, in spite of the fact that this outfit was exposed seven years ago by the Senate Civil Liberties Committee as a front for utilities, canners and banks.

The Committee also rang in representatives of Ensher, Alexander & Barsoom, a canning and fresh fruit and vegetable packing outfit which is engaged in suing FTA for $150,000.

No invitations were issued to any unions. Protests poured in and the chairman set aside a day on which "anyone" would be heard. It was announced the hearing would begin at 9:30. A representative of a farm group, which has worked closely with labor arrived at 9:33 and was informed the hearing had been adjourned.

So—three congressmen took a trip to San Francisco, the headlines screamed accusations from the bosses and then they called it a day.

Where were these friends of the farmers when the chips were down in the farmers' fight for money for soil conservation, rural electrification, etc.? Rep. Schwabe (D., Okla.), one of three members of the subcommittee voted against more money for the farmers. Chairman Smith and Rep. Fisher (D., Tex.) didn't bother to vote at all.

During the recess, Congress is running a number of other circuses, which go by the name of committee investigations:

Representative Ploeser (D., Mo.) is taking a subcommittee of the House Small Business Committee on a junket around the country to attack cooperatives, with special emphasis on working for legislation which will declare farmer cooperatives to be profit making organizations and therefore subject to taxation.

This investigation has a lot of interesting angles for unions as well as farmers. A couple of years ago, a tax bill was passed requiring unions and cooperatives to file financial statements with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. At that time, this column pointed out that this was a step in a program to tax unions as if they were corporations. It should be noted that this congressman is carrying out the program of an organization known as the "National Tax Equality Association," run by a grain broker, Ben McCabe, who sent a bulletin to members of the 80th Congress announcing that "Communist Russia Orders Coops." Mr. Ploeser was a little franker. He said: "Coops interfere with private capitalism."

No listing of committee shenanigans would be complete without reference to another subcommittee of the House Labor Committee, Chaired by Rep. Kersten (R., Wis.). A Mr. McCann, the counsel for Kersten's committee, hauled off and socked AFL lawyer, Joseph Padway, when Padway accused him of using Gestapo tactics. It is obvious that Mr. Padway uttered a simple truth.

While some of the carryings-on of these committees may be amusing, the record shapes up as an attempt to persecute any groups which represent the people. Union busting is first on the list. And the House Labor Committee is up there in front with the unAmerican Committee. They aren't always funny. They broke the UAW-CIO Allis Chalmers strike by a witch hunting campaign against the Allis Chalmers local union.

Past Congresses have used the power of investigation to bring to light real abuses by investigation of monopoly, violation of civil liberties, problems of small businessmen, etc. A new Congress can return to the tradition of real investigation for which Congress was given its powers.

FIGHT THE TAFT ACT

The Taft-Hartley act has been in full effect since August 23. So far, four major international unions—the Machinists (unaffiliated), the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL) the Teamsters (AFL) and the Woodworkers (CIO) have publicly announced that they will file affidavits with the new NLRB swearing that no union officer believes in the violent unconstitutional overthrow of the U. S. government.

The national CIO, acting through its executive officers, has again condemned the act and has deferred final policy on filing the so-called "red" and other affidavits until the CIO convention meets October 13. Meantime, the majority of CIO unions, including FTA and the larger unions such as Steel, UE, UAW, etc. have decided to bypass the NLRB entirely.

The AFL Executive Council, meeting as FTA News goes to press, is as yet undecided, with AFL President William Green predicting that the Council will recommend compliance.

FTA's policy was declared in a special conference on Taft-Hartley early in July, where it was decided unanimously to bypass the NLRB because "the new NLRB set up under the Taft-Hartley act has been designed as an agent of the employers against the interests of the workers, and because our members cannot hope for any solution of their problems of wages and living standards through the new Board."

That decision still stands, for the reasons given. It is to be hoped that all unions, CIO, AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods and unaffiliated, will preserve a united resistance to the Taft-Hartley act and to the new NLRB designed to carry it out.

Repeal of the act is the final solution. All labor has pledged itself to take political action not only for repeal but for the defeat of all Congressmen and Senators who voted for it, regardless of party.

In the meantime, compliance with the act and with the anti-union NLRB not only invites the end of collective bargaining now, but even more seriously weakens the fight for an end to Taft-Hartleyism in all its forms.

FTA has never "complied" with an employer whose aims were anti-union. Compliance with Taft-Hartley means compliance with employers who seek the destruction of all unions.

HAD ENOUGH?

Its not very often that a U. S. Government agency comes out in the open to say that wage cuts have to happen before there will be any price cuts, but the Department of Agriculture has done just that. Here's the quote, taken from an official release on the question of food prices:

"Prices would decline substantially if there is a drop in consumer incomes."

Try reading it this way: "The cost of living would go down if there are wage cuts." Sound any different? Of course not—its the same thing.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Labor Dept.—which almost invariably takes the bosses' side in any argument over figures—says that wholesale prices in July were 50.6 percent above July 1926; 21.4 percent above July 1946 and two percent above last June.

Every sign points to still higher food prices in the next weeks and months. Food costs are going up every day. Shoe manufacturers only recently announced a price increase, especially on children's shoes. (Adults can wear old shoes; children can't. They grow out of them.) Clothing prices are going up, again according to the manufacturers, who ought to know.

Back of every price increase stand the NAM, the meat trust, the food trust and their stooges and open agents in both the Republican and Democratic parties in Congress and the Administration.

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FTA Cigar Workers In Industry Problem Drive

The cigar workers' program on industry problems, organization, the Taft-Hartley act and political action was worked out by some 81 cigar leaders of 10 FTA locals in the first national Cigar Conference in Philadelphia, August 9-10.

"This gathering of cigar leaders," said Chairman Armando Ramirez, "is historic. Such a meeting of the leaders of the struggle for conditions in the cigar industry is long overdue. This conference will weld our determination to carry the union through the stormy days ahead and to organize the unorganized." Ramirez urged every delegate to speak out on conditions in his shop and to take part in making the program.

The conference adopted the chairman's plan of work — four committees to meet in the afternoon and the second day's discussion to turn around their reports.

Discussions on the report of the Industry Problems committee, chaired by Josephine Pozzuto, shop chairlady of the Philadelphia American Tobacco plant, Local 186, turned mainly around the double die machine, piece work, cleanup time and recent shutdowns.

The program adopted included measures to control the speedup on double die machines and to prevent rate cutting; abolition of piece rates where this can be negotiated so that earnings on higher priced cigars will not be cut; payment for cleanup time and organization to prevent runaway shops; and disposal of surplus cigars in export trade.

Reporting for the Taft-Hartley committee, Chairman Minnie Duckro, DWG Local 69, Lima, Ohio proposed measures to prevent locals from becoming ensnared in damage suits, urged creating union shops by a drive for 100 percent membership in every plant; and vigorous fighting to organize the unorganized and for all of labor's rights outside the now strongly anti-union NLRB machinery.

After surveying the Research Department's report on organization in the cigar industry and studying needs to protect FTA plants and the situations in the plants where the 23,000 unorganized workers are employed, the organizing committee made a number of proposals for organizing drives. Mary Montanaro, chairlady of Frieder Cigar, Philadelphia, Local 186, chaired this committee. The program called for prompt completion of the organizing assessment to assist in carrying out the program.

The PAC committee's report, given by committee chairman Anna Magee, sounded the call for collection of the $1 PAC contribution and for organization to defeat all those who voted for the Taft-Hartley act.

Full support of the international to the conference program was pledged by President Donald Henderson who closed the meeting on a note of action. "This splendid conference will have no real meaning," he said, "unless the international union, the locals, and all the delegates here work hard to carry out the program. I am confident that together we will do the job."

CALIFORNIA-ARIZONA FTA LOCALS PLAN PEOPLE'S PARTY CAMPAIGN

The annual conference of the Arizona-California Region was held in San Francisco at the California Labor School on August 30th and 31st.

The conference was attended by 26 delegates representing seven locals having a membership of better than 10,000. In addition to the regular delegates there were 15 alternates and 25 visitors and observers making a total of 66 people in attendance.

The conference opened with greetings and remarks from FTA Legislative Representative Elizabeth Sasuly, who described the double dealing during the vote on the Taft-Hartley veto and stressed the manner in which the leaders of the Democratic party gave, lip-service only to the veto, pointing out that the veto was motivated by political expediency and not by support of labor and the people.

Sasuly urged the delegates to go back to their locals and intensify their political work and particularly stressed the need of getting in the PAC dollars.

Paul Schlipf, CIO state legislative representative, outlined the state political program. He called the delegates attention to a new pamphlet being put out by the California CIO entitled the "High Price of Congressmen" which graphically demonstrated how California's legislators had cut the worker's paychecks by supporting the destruction of OPA and rent control and other anti-labor legislation.

The conference was organized in panel sessions on organizing, finances and regional administration, Taft-Hartley Act and collective bargaining; local union leadership and political action and legislation.

The conference was aided by Irwin Elber, trade union director of the California Labor School who worked with the panel on local union leadership, Paul Pinsky, CIO state research director and Bertram Edises who worked with the panel on the Taft-Hartley act and collective bargaining and Elizabeth Sasuly and Paul Schlipf State CIO legislative director who worked with the panel on political action and legislation.

Holman Day, FTA International Board member and President of the SWH area of Local 78 chaired the panel on Taft-Hartley and collective bargaining.

The most enthusiastically discussed phase of the conference was the report of the panel on political action and legislation.

In its report the committee stressed the need for collecting PAC finances and also to build a fighting fund to fight the Taft-Hartley bill in line with the action taken by the California CIO. The fighting fund was to be built by $5.00 voluntary contributions from each member and one dollar of this was to go to PAC.

There was spirited discussion on the need to form a peoples' party and the conference unanimously went on record for the formation of such a party in California by adopting the following recommendation of the committee.

"A committee in California is now in the process of circulating a petition in the state for establishment of an independent apparatus known as the Independent Progressive Party. We believe this drive will, if successful in securing a sufficient number of signatures, guarantee that labor can secure nomination of progressive candidates where the established parties fail to do so; thereby improving labor's political position."

The conference elected a board of regional advisors, to meet with the Regional Director and to discuss regional problems. The board is composed of Frank Menizes, business manager from the SWH area, Local 78; Dixie Tiller, business manager of Local 25, Dick Turner, member of the Local 78 joint council, Salt River Valley area; Ed Smith of Local 50 and Sarah Miller, financial secretary of Local 82 who was elected to the same post in the Regional Council to replace Doc Johnson.

The conference was also highlighted by a discussion on the attempts of the Ensher Alexander Co. to break the union, (Local 78) by putting Japanese on the job and then issuing press releases to the effect that the union was discriminating against the Japanese by denying them membership.

The conference and particularly the delegates from Local 78 branded this an employer lie and an effort to split the union by race hatred. Carrie Hawkins, Business Agent of Local 78 SSS area pointed out they had many Japanese in that area.

The council delegates pointed out that we could anticipate more employer attacks based on splitting the union on racial lines and reafirmed the position of FTA relative to fighting against all forms of racial discrimination and proposed that all locals pay particular attention to taking the lead in fighting for the rights of the racial minorities.

Brother Hursel Alexander, business manager from Local 50 brought the conference greetings from his local and spoke of the organizational progress they had made in the Fruitvale Cannery in Oakland.

FIGHT MOVE TO DENY CAN WORKERS JOBS

FTA's suit under the old Wagner act to reinstate 580 California cannery workers fired for union activity still stands, despite rulings of the new NLRB's general counsel, Robert Denham, to the contrary, FTA President Donald Henderson declared in Los Angeles recently.

The case involves the illegal signing of a closed shop, backdoor agreement between the AFL Teamsters and California Processors and Growers, Inc., master cannery association in the northern part of the state.

The case began when FTA won a plurality in a 1945 NLRB election involving 50,000 cannery workers in northern California, only to have the election set aside by the NLRB on flimsy technical grounds. A second election held in 1946 was prejudiced from the start by the existence of the backdoor Teamster contract, which was used to intimidate the workers and to prevent the holding of a fair election—in which, significantly, the Teamsters failed to win a majority.

FTA's protests have been before the NLRB and the courts ever since, with the recent announcement by Denham that the new NLRB would drop the case after passage of the Taft-Hartley act.

"The violations of the Wagner act and the crimes committed by the cannery operators and the AFL Teamsters during the cannery election of 1945 and 1946 cannot be wiped out or shoved aside either by passage of the Taft-Hartley act or by employer inspired statements of Robert Denham," Henderson said.

"For the new NLRB to do anything other than prosecute these cases to their conclusion would be to punish the thousands of cannery workers who recognized and abided by the Wagner act and the orders of the NLRB and to reward the cannery employers and the AFL Teamsters for violating the act and defying the board," he added.

"Whether or not the officials of FTA-CIO file affidavits as called for under the Taft-Hartley act has no bearing on the case.

"The signing of an illegal contract and the subsequent holding of an illegal election still remain crimes against the old NLRB that must be prosecuted by the new NLRB.

"The passage of the Taft-Hartley act does not legalize these crimes of 1945 and 1946."

N.Y. CIO For Labor Party

Continued support of the American Labor Party and a call for a return to the foreign and domestic policies of FDR marked the annual convention of the New York state CIO Council, held in Albany, N. Y., early this month.

Both resolutions were adopted after considerable debate over a proposal to drop the ALP and a demand for sharp condemnation of the Soviet Union in the foreign policy resolution.

FTA Vice-President Armando Ramirez, a member of the Council's Executive Board, dropped out in favor of FTA Regional Severino Martinez of New York, who was elected to the board in his place.

The Council also voted support for the World Federation of Trade Unions and urged unity of all labor to fight the Taft-Hartley act, as originally proposed by CIO President Philip Murray.

New Officers

Newly elected officers of Local 64, San Diego, Calif., are: Robert Galvan, president; Clarence Kiesling, first vice president; Vernon Lee, second vice president; Agnes Adams, secretary-treasurer; Ann Salazar, recording secretary; Charlotte Waters, Jack Pena, and Elsie Froelick, trustees; and Julio Ortiz, sergeant-at-arms.

Proud of their new union shop contract are these members of the FTA-CIO union shop committee at the Fruitvale Canning Company plant in Oakland, Calif. Left to right, Matt Celani, strategy committee; Fleater Hughes, steward, preparation department; Florence Costa, steward, canning department; Gussie Ortega, steward, cook room; Billie Vargas, steward, cocktail department; and Charles McKinney, chairman, safety committee. These workers are proud, too, of the unity they've achieved between all groups and departments in the plant.

Local 7-2 Renews Pacts

By Florence Palmer

Local 7-2 recently signed agreements with National Fruit Canning Company and Bergoust-Wilson Company. These were a renewal of the old contracts with the exception of wages. A 6½c increase for women and a 9c per hour increase for men was obtained, bringing the minimum wage scales for women to 92½ cents per hour and for men $1.09 per hour with classifications up to $1.47½ cents per hour.

The union originally asked for an increase to compensate for the rise in the cost of living, and was reluctant to accept the low increase offered, especially the differential between the men and the women. However, 90 per cent of the fruit and vegetable canning industry in the northwest had already signed on that basis, so it seemed the best thing to do at this time. The increase is retroactive to March 1, 1947.

The "Thought Police" are on the prowl says cover of this Civil Rights Congress leaflet urging support for abolition of the un-American committee in Congress. Leaflet, plus FTA pamphlet on the committee "Who's un-American" explains why unAmerican committee must be ended to safeguard civil rights, unions and living conditions for all.

INCREASES OF 30-40c WON BY ALASKA FTA

By Robert Kinney

FTA-CIO has scored again in southeastern Alaska. On August 22nd an agreement was arrived at between the Salmon By-Products Company and Local 237, Ketchikan, where the local represents the newly-organized employes of the company's Fish Reduction plant situated at Wards Cove, Alaska.

All previous attempts to organize employes in this plant had failed. Due to the paternalistic attitude of the employer and the coercive methods used against union organization in the past, this Company had remained unorganized. The employer, rather than hiring resident employees, obtained his labor by recruiting high school and college students from outside. Most of these employes had no previous experience with labor unions and, therefore, were ignorant of the wage conditions prevailing in the Territory for similar work.

A group of the employes upon learning that their wages would be 85c per hour, sought out the FTA and asked the union what could be done to get the plant organized. In a couple of days, 90% of the employes had signed up with the union, a request of the company had been made to recognize FTA as bargaining agent for their employes and negotiations began. The negotiating committee, selected by the employes, was made up entirely of the college boys that had been hired by the company. These college boys were learning fast about organized labor!

A week after negotiations had begun, the company began to stall about meeting with the negotiating committee. In order to force the company to bargain in good faith, the employes struck the plant August 19 and refused to resume operations until the company started to negotiate. The strength of the rank and file behind the union's negotiating committee forced the company to back down and an agreement was reached August 22. Gains won were the following:

1. General increase of 40c per hour for Class "A" and 30c per hour for Class "B". This brought the wages up from 85c per hour to $1.15 per hour and $1.25 per hour respectively. (Board and Room is included.)

2. Time and one-half for overtime which gave an increase of 60c for Class "A" and 45c for Class "B" on overtime. Double time for penalty time was won which the employees had not had previously.

3. Elimination of no-strike clause.

4. Union security clause.

5. $67.50 per month additional where board and room is not furnished.

6. First-class transportation to and from job with travel pay.

All gains won were made retroactive to August 1st. The union's negotiating committee consisted of the following: Robert Gauthier, Ted Johnson, Ray Wolfe, William Marcus. Assistance was also given by Vern Albright, secretary of the Ketchikan CIO Council and Winnie Thompson, representative of IFAWA, CIO.

These are the men and women who signed Local 237's new contract with the Salmon Byproducts Company of Ketchikan, Alaska. From left they are: Lester Gore, company lawyer and W. Lebo, for management; Winnie Thompson, sitting in for the CIO Fishermen's Union; Vern Albright, Ketchikan CIO Council; Robert Uauthier; William Marcus; Ray Wolfe; Ted Johnson and FTA Intl. Organizer Robert Kinney.

22 Expels Three Finks

Gene Pratt, Anne Mathews, Spencer Long and Howard Pilcher were expelled from membership in United Tobacco Workers Local 22 by vote of the union's executive board on charges of deserting the union and betraying the membership during the strike at R. J. Reynolds Co.

The four expelled are those who made public attacks during the strike on the union and its leadership as "Communist dominated" and "irresponsible." Three of them, Pratt, Mathews and Long, also testified against the union before the unAmerican committee in Washington in the course of an investigation launched during the strike.

Charges against the four former members included "strike-breaking, acting as informants for the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., and enemies of the membership."

Alaska CIO, AFL in Unity

A joint AFL-CIO Committee is being established in Ketchikan, Alaska to work together on a common program in order to defeat the enemies of labor.

Officers and regular delegates of the Ketchikan Industrial Union Council (CIO) and the Ketchikan Central Labor Council (AFL) met in joint session on August 20, 1947 and adopted a three-point program of action. Recognizing that the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act made it imperative for labor to band together and unify their ranks, a resolution was passed calling for a "joint AFL-CIO Committee to be immediately established to work out strategy and tactics for defeating the Taft-Hartley act and those who voted for it in Congress."

The resolution denouncing the Taft-Hartley act said that it violates every right that American workers have won over past generations of struggle. It seeks to turn all U. S. government agencies dealing with labor over to the employers in order to oppress labor.

A final resolution was passed dealing with the independent political organization of labor. It was recognized that "labor must take the initiative in the building of a people's party because labor is the strongest organized force for democracy in our country."

All locals affiliated to both Councils are asked to adopt this three point program of action and to appoint their representative to the joint AFL-CIO Committee.

The Ketchikan labor movement will press for similar AFL-CIO joint action throughout the Territory of Alaska and in the near future will initiate a territorial conference of AFL and CIO.

In the Locals

45 Holds PAC Festival

"Give a dollar to PAC and save our other paid holidays" was the theme of Local 45's Labor Day Festival in Richmond, Va. Following a program of speakers and entertainment at the union hall, PAC donations were made, and Local 45 members settled down to enjoy platters of fried chicken and other good foods prepared by the women members. The Festival was arranged by the Local's entertainment committee headed by Charles Lipscombe.

Latest reports from Local 57 in Richmond indicate that 75% of the members have already donated to PAC, with the 100% goal soon to be reached.

WIN LEAFHOUSE PACT

In the face of the worst attacks against labor in many years, and the new North Carolina anti-labor law, Local 22 leafhouse workers in Winston-Salem, N. C. won the fight to maintain their gains with the signing of contracts at three leafhouses—Export, Winston Leaf and Piedmont.

At Export, where the first contract was signed, the workers got a 65c minimum plus an improved vacation plan and three paid holidays. They maintained overtime pay at time and a half after eight hours a day and 40 hours a week, in spite of overtime exemptions in the leaf tobacco industry and the bosses' efforts to drop this union gain.

FTA-CIO ON THE AIR

Are women discriminated against in earning a living? Anyone with doubts should have heard the CBS Cross Section USA radio program on August 23, when Sylvia Neff, financial secretary of Campbell Soup, Local 80 exposed discrimination against women in industry.

Sister Neff, representing FTA-CIO, was one of four women from labor, industry and women's organizations who examined the question.

To prove her point she used the canning industry, where 50% of employes are women, as an example. She showed how women are discriminated against in pay and promotions, through the classification of jobs by sex.

"Women don't go out to work just for the fun of it or for pleasure, they have to work to support themselves and their families," Sister Neff declared.

"Women are doing a double job. They go out to work, and when they come home they have a job to do at home.

"Every woman who's married wants to be home and have a home life. But because of the necessity of educating her children, she has to go out and help her husband, since his pay is not sufficient. We are not looking for luxuries, but we want to be comfortable and have a decent way of life."

Women join unions, she concluded, "because the union is teaching us to fight against discrimination. We are fighting for equal pay, equal promotion and for full employment for all."

You Can't Eat Gratitude

Draw your own conclusions from the following story which appeared in Local 22's newspaper, the United Tobacco Worker. It's about the fate of a scab after the Camel cigarette strike was settled.

She was sitting crying in the Unemployment Compensation Office when three union members saw her. With her were her two children.

The union members asked what the trouble was. She had just been fired, after 11 years with R. J. Reynolds, when she went back after being out sick for six weeks. "We don't want people who lose time," they told her.

"I wish you could take my picture and my story to the rest of those people in the plant," she said. "I think they ought to know just how much gratitude the company has.

"I was one of those who stayed in the plant during the strike. They took me off my job and put me on somebody else's job. Mr. Baumgardner made us a beautiful speech, about how much the company appreciated what we were doing for them, and how he hoped they could return the favor for us some time.

"Well, now I see just what their 'appreciation' means."

For Closer Union Contact

To strengthen FTA and enable the membership to react quickly on emergency issues in the coming period, FTA Secretary-Treasurer Harold J. Lane called on all amalgamated locals to establish closer contact between union leaders in the plants and the national office.

He pointed out how hard it is for many large locals with several plants under contract to get in touch immediately with plant leaders when emergency action must be taken. To resolve this difficulty, Lane urged each amalgamated local to send the national office a complete list of the names and addresses of all division chairmen or chief shop stewards in every plant, and to keep these lists up to date.

Such and up to date list will enable the national office to communicate directly with these local leaders on questions which require immediate action, he said.

The Mailman Brings . . .

To the Editor, FTA News:

The attitude of the tobacco companies toward the tobacco workers in Greenville, N.C., shows that they are not satisfied with just the Taft-Hartley anti-labor law. These companies are using every trick in the bag to divide our members and destroy our union, from red-baiting to blaming the union for a layoff at the Imperial Tobacco Co.

The workers are not falling for it because we've read the new FTA pamphlet "Who's unAmerican." In its exposure of our enemies, the pamphlet encourages us to fight on.

We are exceedingly grateful for this new pamphlet, and hope the union will publish more like it. It was used at our leadership training school late in July.

Fraternally yours,
Cornelius Simmons, chairman
Greenville Division Local 10

FTA URGES FARMERS, CIO FIGHT FOR COOPS

A united farmer-labor fight to save farmers' and other cooperatives from big business attacks in Congress was urged on the National Farmers Union this week by FTA President Donald Henderson.

Henderson proposed that FTA-CIO and the Farmers Union get together as soon as possible to work out ways of meeting the attack on coops now being carried on by the Republican led House Small Business Committee of Congress.

"The violent and unprincipled attack by the Congressional Small Business Committee on farmers cooperatives is a threat to the workers of both farmers and workers," Henderson wrote to Farmers Union President James G. Patton.

"Labor has had a long and painful experience with such attacks from big business agents disguised as members of Congress, ranging from the un-American Activities committee to the House Labor committee and other constituted for the sole purpose of attempting to damage unions.

"Now big business is out to do a wrecking job on farmers' coops, using the House Small Business committee as a convenient mask. Members of our union, with their close relations to farmers, realize perhaps more clearly than others the dangers to the national welfare involved in any attack on the welfare of the family-size farmer."

Henderson urged representatives of the two organizations to meet in an early conference to work out ways of fighting the big trusts' drive against farmers and all other kinds of coops.

Meantime, evidence piled up to show that the Republicans responsible for the committee's drive against coops were beginning to be more than a little upset by the hornet's nest of farmer protests they have poked into.

Unions are affected by the drive to place new and heavier taxes on coops, since the same groups threatening to tax the coops out of existence have also threatened to do the same job on union finances.

Coops, of course, are taxed today as any other business is taxed. The only part of their resources not taxed is the "patronage refund" or cash discount they pay to their customer-owners at the end of the year. This usually amounts to less than five percent of the total of money handled by the coop in one year.

But taxing this small amount is not the real objective of big business. That is to smash whatever competition the coops offer to the big chain stores and remove the last small obstacle to complete monopoly control of food and other retail outlets.

FTA 7 TO GET NEW OFFICERS

Dissolution of FTA Local 7 and the outright misappropriation of the union's funds were recently stopped by prompt action of the International in taking over the local. A number of the local officials were restrained from acting as officers of the local by an injunction obtained in the county superior court.

Following this action, the international appointed an administrative committee composed of some of the former officers plus a number of rank and file members of the union to carry on the local's business while an election is being held.

The situation was precipitated by Max Gonzales, who shot at a member of the union during a hot debate in one of the local's meetings. He pleaded guilty to third degree assault in police court but the local's executive board refused to recognize his expulsion from the union even after the International Executive Board found him guilty and ordered him expelled.

An investigation, made by organizational Director John Tisa and by Prudencio Mori, Local 7's president, uncovered the plot to dissolve the union, place the union's assets in the hands of three men, and misappropriate $5,000 to fight any court action against this dissolution.

The ousted officials, led by ex-business agent Cornelio Briones, ex-secretary Victor Velasco and ex-dispatcher Vincent Pilien, then tried to set up a rival "independent" union in competition with Local 7. This attempt has failed miserably and the latest move of the ousted group is to ask the court to set aside the elections now being held as illegal, although such elections were ordered by the judge granting the International an injunction against these ousted officials.

The fine hand of the Alaska salmon industry appeared when the members of the industry refused to remit to the union dues deducted from the members, claiming that they were waiting until such a time as it would be decided to whom the dues should be paid. The local is now preparing suits against the canners for these dues plus costs and damages. Already some of the packers have weakened and paid the dues to the local.

Several attempts have been made in Alaska to get members of the union to repudiate their dues payments to the union and declare themselves in favor of dissolution of Local 7. These attempts have failed and to date all the crews returing from the north have pledged their support to Local 7.

In the offices of the union, order is gradually being returned to the affairs of the union and the needs of the membership attended to for the first time in months. The whole atmosphere of Local 7 has changed and members are speaking freely about the affairs of the union without the fear of gunplay and violence. The elections which will be over in October are receiving solid support from the rank and file.

FTA 22 HELPS BUILD CIO UNITY IN WINSTON

In a move to build a CIO Industrial Union Council in Winston-Salem, N. C., a conference of CIO unions was held here recently and plans were announced "to unite more closely in order to cooperate most effectively with labor groups and all other democratic organizations of the people" against groups which they said are "recklessly destroying the welfare of the nation."

A statement issued after the conference cited "dangerously mounting prices" and other conditions developing under the present Congress, and pledged to work for the defeat of Senator Umstead "and the Republican-Democratic organization in Congress which is helping big money interests drain off the wealth of the nation at the expense of the people."

"The purpose of our meeting is to unite more closely, in order to cooperate most effectively with labor groups and all other democratic organizations of the people," the unions said. "We will work for the defeat in 1948 of Senator Umstead, and the Republican-Democratic organization in Congress which is helping big money interests drain off the wealth of the nation at the expense of the people.

"We are glad to note that the North Carolina AFL at its convention has taken a similar stand. We favor cooperation of all groups in the interest of the people.

"The combination of Republican and Democratic party forces in Congreses to serve big business is getting the whole nation into serious difficulties. This afternoon's newspapers report that our dollars today will buy only half what they did in 1939, and that over half of this price increase on most items has come since June of last year, when price control was killed.

BAD HOUSING BREEDS DISEASE

By Physicians Forum

More fundamental to good health than doctors and pills is the way people live. Nothing could do more to improve and maintain the health of the people in this country than to assure everyone a decent home and a decent income.

The exact ways that housing affects health are difficult to say. People who have bad housing usually have low income, poor working conditions, deficient diets, and many other disadvantages—so one can't blame all their diseases on the housing alone.

That bad health and bad housing tend to go together, however, is beyond question. It's also clear that if a family's housing is improved, even if nothing else is changed, they tend to have less illness.

There are some direct influences of housing on health. Typhus fever, for example, is a result of housing that is so poor that rats, which carry this dread disease, run about. Malaria can be a result of housing without screens, so that malaria-carrying mosquitoes come in and bite the occupants. Dysentry is often a result of housing in which proper sanitary or food-shortage facilities are lacking.

But the much more important effects of housing on health are indirect. Tuberculosis — still the greatest killer in the prime-of-life years — is spead readily where people live in congested rooms. When a tuberculous parent must live in the same room with his children, the treacherous germ is almost inevitably passed along.

The same applies to any communicable disease. The prosperous family can isolate the child with scarlet fever in his own room, but the low income family simply does not have the space. When one child gets an infectious disease, often they all get it (unless they're immune from a previous attack or an immunization.)

Cold, damp, or improperly ventilated housing leads to respiratory disease, which is the chief cause of disability and lost wages. Pneumonia is far more frequent in the slums than in the suburbs. Rheumatism is aggravated in bad housing, as well as the child-killer, rheumatic fever.

No part of the nation is free of bad housing. The villages and rural sections have their blighted areas and broken-down shacks, just as the big cities have their slums.

Only a vast public housing program, with government funds can solve the problem. The Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill is a beginning. It should be passed for the sake of health, if for no other reason.

ON JIM CROW TRACK?

The government's "Freedom Train," widely-advertised trainload of historic U. S. documents now touring the country is apparently running on a Jim Crow track.

Not only that, but the train, carrying such basic papers as the constitution, the Declaration of Independence and the like, apparently had no room for any document or other souvenir of American labor's struggle for freedom.

This is the only conclusion possible after study of the following items in connection with the train:

1. No Negroes will be in attendance on the train, either as guides, guards or in any other capacity.

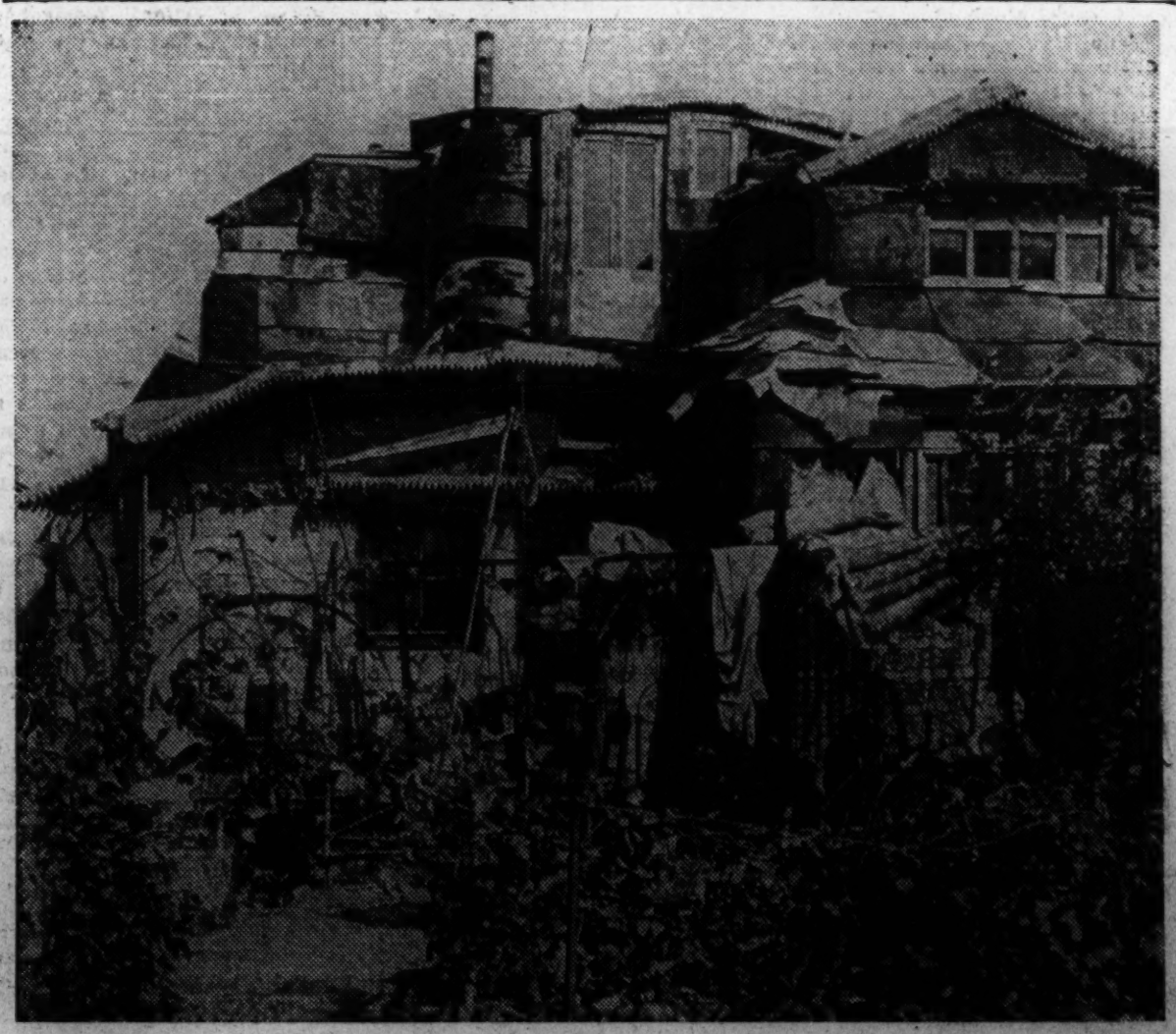
2. Those in charge of the train will "follow local customs" when in the South—i.e., Negroes won't be allowed to look at the documents in the train if local Jim Crow forbids them.

3. Sponsors of the train (originated by U. S. Attorney-General Tom Clark, of Texas) have refused a request by Congressman Adolph Sabath (D., Ill.) to carry any documents relating to U. S. labor. Sabath wrote Clark suggesting that such historic papers as the original of the Wagner act etc be exhibited as part of American history.

Paul Robeson, singer and friend of FTA-CIO, will sing a song about Jim Crow on the "Freedom Train" at a Henry Wallace mass meeting in Philadelphia where the train originates Sept. 19.

Philadelphia, birthplace of American indepence, also practises Jim Crow (CIO convention delegates were refused admission to a Philadelphia hotel last January) and its government cannot be accused of being friendly to labor.

It was Philadelphia police that clubbed and charged peaceful CIO strikers in a UE strike in 1946, when scores of workers were savagely beaten and ridden down by mounted cops for the "crime" of picketing.



FTA HELPS FARMERS FIGHT PRICE SQUEEZE

FTA-CIO suppot for working farmers in their fight against a profiteering middlemen's price squeeze on produce was expressed recently by Lewis A. Bentzley, FTA vice-president in charge of farmer-labor relations.

Bentzley appeared at a number of farmers' meetings in the southern New Jersey where produce growers have been feeling the heavy hand of the wholesale buyers, who have been refusing to pay anything better than ruinous prices — while continuing to charge the consumer at inflated rates.

FTA's pledge of help was given in connection with meetings of produce growers in South Jersey, where vegetables have been ploughed back into the fields because wholesale prices do not even begin to cover cost of production. Appearing at a number of meetings where the farmers have been organizing branches of the Natl. Farmers Union, Bentzley found an enthusiastic response to his proposal of farmer-labor cooperation against the food trusts.

In speaking to the farmers, Bentzley blasted the newspaper-fostered fiction that workers are getting "rich" while the farmers have a tough time getting rid of their produce. The opposite is happening, he declared, as workers purchasing power falls off through monopoly rigged prices which do not benefit either farmer or worker.

Ed Yeomans, eastern secretary of the Natl. Farmers Union, also spoke at the meeting, urging the farmers to organize and to demand that farmers markets, free of big buyer control, be operated in the cities nearby. This, he pointed out, would enable the farmers to bring their produce directly to the consumer, to the benefit of both. Since the first meetings, a successful experiment in such direct marketing has been carried out in Newark, N. J., where workers were able to find produce at lower prices and farmers were able to get around the middleman.

Examples of the price spread show that Jersey tomato growers, for example, have been getting as little as 50 cents for a 20 pound basket of tomatoes, which the Atlantic and Pacific stores resell at 20 cents a pound to workers in the cities—a 1,600 percent profit.

Snap beans, selling at two pounds for a quarter in the city, brought literally no offers at all from the produce buyers, and farmers are forced to plow them under. Peppers retailing at two for 15 cents brought the farmer only 75 cents a bushel—and so on.

A Film With A Point

"Crossfire" (RKO) is something new out of Hollywood—a movie that makes sense on an issue that other movies never touch. The issue is anti-Semitism and discrimination, and "Crossfire" does a good job of showing what a despicable thing race hatred is.

Wrapped up in the routine of a detective story, "Crossfire" shows how a supposedly human being can degenerate into a Nazi style of killer by hating Jews.

"Crossfire" is a remarkable picture, for Hollywood, where most all the movies seem to be written, produced, directed and acted by baboons.

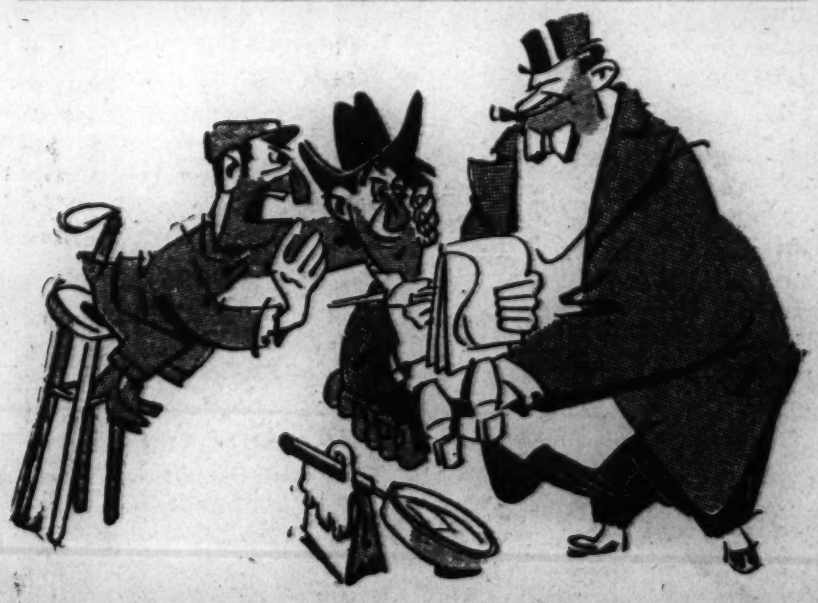
But "Crossfire" misses the main point about race hate and discrimination when it fails to point to the real forces behind such things. Why do we have race hate and jim crow? The answer is because certain people make money out of it.

The people who make money out of race hate and discrimination are the employers, the monopoly corporations that control U. S. industry. They make money out of race hate and jim crow because it's easier to exploit people when you keep them in a constant condition of inferiority by restricting their rights and treating them worse than you treat other people.

American employers have this down to a fine art. More money is made from the labor of minority peoples in America than is made from the majority of workers. Super exploitation pays super profits. That is why the employers have created jim crow and why they fight so hard to keep it.

The same kind of monopoly corporations that run the food and tobacco industries run Hollywood. They have the same financial stake in discrimination. That is why most Hollywood movies show minorities — Negroes, Jews, the foreign born —as objects of hatred, fear or ridicule. The same motive leads the newspapers, the radio and even some churches to uphold the system of racial discrimination — the motive of protecting profits.

"Crossfire" should say these things, but it doesn't. Perhaps that's too much to expect. Anyway, you should see it if it comes to town.



How the bosses' stooges in Congress committees get their "inside information" on unions is shown in this cartoon from FTA's pamphlet exposing the House Committee on unAmerican Activities, titled "Who's unAmerican?" Pamphlet sells for 10c a copy retail; discounts on bulk orders. Has your local put in its order yet? Write FTA Press and Publicity Dept., 20th and Race, Philadelphia 3, Pa., for yours, now.

The Fight That Built The Union

If you want to live through the 40 days with the auto workers of Flint when they formed their union and smashed the tyranny of the auto industry, you should read "The Many and the Few" by Henry Kraus.

It isn't like reading any other book you can think of. Reading it is more real than going to a good movie. You are hardly conscious of turning printed pages as you live through experiences like these.

You will see the piles of union papers in an elevator shaft, thrown there by "Frenchy" Dubuc and Dick Adlen, stoolpigeons who volunteered to distribute the paper in order to sabotage. You will become one of the courageous auto workers who dared work with Wyndham Mortimer and with Wyndha mMortimer and Bob Travis in secret committees, to organize the union.

As groups of workers begin resisting speed-up and piece rate cuts in pockets of the giant plants, you will go to Bud Simmons home at 2 A.M. following his shift and hear him say to Travis "honest to God, Bob, you've got to let me pull a strike . . ."

"You think they're as ready as that?" Travis asked, trying to conceal his own excitement.

"Ready?" Simmons cried, his voice pitched high with impatience. "They're like a pregnant woman in her tenth month!"

Then a sudden glare of a car's headlights will strike the drawn window blinds.

"That's the Black Legion," Simmons will explain matter-of-factly. "They think there's a meeting here tonight."

Organization was achieved after a 40 day sitdown strike early in 1937 during which everything in the book, and then some was thrown at the strikers. You'll live through the nights sleeping in the plants, the battles with the police, court hearings, negotiations, demonstrations of 25,000 workers, the tenseness of expected attacks by the vigilante's.

You will be part of the Women's Brigade, feeding the men, marching at the head of picket lines—and will get to know Pat Wiseman who never missed a day on the picket line.

Once a male companion asks Pat jokingly what she expects to get out of it, a union job?

"I never see a woman take such a lead before," he says.

"I'll tell you why I'm doing it," Pat snaps back, her nostrils flaring. "You're getting fifteen dollars a week more than I am for the same number of hours and I'll be damned if I don't work as hard as you do."

How can the book be so real, you may well ask? Because it is written by a man who was part of the struggle. The names are real people, the words what they actually said, the events really happened.

President Henderson has urged all locals to obtain several copies of "The Many and the Few" for circulation among the membership. They can be ordered from the National Office for $2 each. The book is published by the Plantin Press, Los Angeles, California and sold at bookstores for $2.50.

EIGHT GOOD REASONS TO READ FTA NEWS

The Story of J. P. Morgan & Co.'s ties with the magazines and newspapers you read.

NEWSPAPERS

1) The New York Sun: In 1926 the Sun was bought by its leading executives through a loan of $11,000,000 from the Guaranty Trust Co. (Morgan). Much of the loan is still said to be outstanding. Since that time the Sun has followed the Morgan line.

2) Chicago Daily News: Sewell Avery, president of Montgomery Ward and Co. (Morgan) is director of this big Chicago paper.

3) Scripps-Howard: In 1928 a bond issue of $8,500,000 was floated to finance this chain of papers through the Guafanty Trust Co. (Morgan of course). Failure to show earnings on these bonds would place the Scripps-Howard newspapers directly in the hands of bankers, acting for the bondholders.

4) Gardner Cowles Publications: The Des Moines, Iowa, Register and the Minneapolis, Minn., Star-Journal are owned by the Gardner Cowles family, closely related to the Lamont family, large Morgan stockholders. They also own Look magazine.

MAGAZINES

5 Saturday Review of Literature: Money to start it came from Thomas W. Lamont, Morgan man. Their money started it and their money foots the bills.

6) Crowell Publishing Co.: Publishers of the American Magazine, Country Home, Collier's, Woman's Home Companion. For many years Thomas Lamont (same man) was director. Today A. H. Lockett does the job.

7) Newsweek: A. H. Lockett sees to it that the Morgan interests are taken care of here, too. Magazine is owned by Astor-Harriman - Mellon - Whitney - Cheney combine.

8) Time, Inc.: Leading stockholders are W. A. Harriman, J. P. Morgan and Co. through Henry P. Davison a partner; F. DuSossiot Duke; Mrs. Mimi B. Durant; Henry Luce, editor, founder; and others. Time, Inc. is owned by a small group of big business. Life, Time, and Fortune magazines are directly under their control.

Unbelievable? Not if you study these newspapers and magazines closely. They fought Roosevelt. They fought OPA. They fight labor—always.

In 99 percent of the cases, big business has its hands in the newspapers and magazines you read, and in the radio programs you listen to.

Remember how Life magazine tried to make a hero out of Sewell Avery during the war? No wonder . . . they are in the same big business family.

Most big business firms have their fingers in publishing and radio. Proctor and Gamble, for example, are reported to own a chain of weekly newspapers in Ohio, a powerful chain. No wonder Senator Robert Taft does their bidding.

Keep your eye on the ball. Some 99 percent of what you read is big business propaganda.

Read your labor newspapers—FTA News, for the truth.

(From Local 19's newspaper, FTA Voice.)

DON'T SAY IT!

Big-hearted canning companies are weeping salt tears for the poor farmer who doesn't have a contract with them—holding a handkerchief to their streaming eyes with one hand while they push away a basket of tomatoes with the other. Maybe the fact that growers are beginning to organize against one-sided contracts has something to do with this sudden concern.

* * *

Meat packing trust says their profits are only a teeny, teeny fraction of a cent despite all the trouble they go to to bring us meat. American Meat Institute says prices will have to go up again. Maybe the packers will be really happy when hamburger hits $1 a pound, nobody buys any meat and the tired meat trust can close up shop and quit an ungrateful business for good.

* * *

Labor "productivity" must go up, say bosses' economic experts and some labor officials. What these "labor" people need is a few hours back on the line—if they ever hit one—to learn a little something about "productivity"—which is a $2.00 word for speedup. Like at the height of a canning pack, for example.

* * *

Big business, through its newspapers and radio, is all set to blame labor for the depression they see coming. When they can prove to us that its labor that owns the factories, runs the monopolies, increases prices, makes it impossible for people to buy goods, increases monopoly control, lays off workers, and shuts down factories, then maybe we'll be ready to believe them.

* * *

Here's a tip to the wise: watch out for a high-powered publicity campaign to build up the Democratic Party—from Rankin on up—as the great "friend of labor." This has been definitely decided by the top Democratic strategy brains.

Murray Warns Of Crisis

In a Labor Day speech broadcast to the entire nation Sept. 1, CIO Pres. Philip Murray warned that the U. S. is heading toward another depression which could "easily make the last one appear to be only a minor economic setback."

"I am not saying that another depression is just around the corner," he emphasized. "I am saying that the present trend of higher and higher profits and smaller and smaller purchasing power must be halted and reversed if we are to avoid another economic chaos in the future."

Murray charged that the long-awaited peace was being taken over by the same profiteers and special interests groups who were responsible for the tragic boom and bust cycles of the past.

Recalling Natl. Assn. of Manufacturers claims that ending price controls would lead to an adjustment of prices, Murray said: "The high prices and enormous profits of today provide convincing proof that we were right and that our opponents were wrong."

The special interests groups were also responsible for passage of the Taft-Hartley bill aimed at destroying unions, Murray said.

Warning that American workers were in a fighting mood, the CIO chieftain said: "They are determined that their unions will not be weakened or destroyed. They are determined to change the anti-labor complexion of Congress. They are determined to wipe the infamous Taft-Hartley law from the statute books. Their determination is being translated into action—into democratic action—into political action."

HOW TO FIGHT TAFT-HARTLEY SLAVE ACT

By Connie Anderson

After August 23, a closed shop is an unfair labor practice. (Closed shop means all workers must be union members and only union members can be hired.)

Union shop and maintenance of membership contracts are "fair" only if impossible conditions are met. (Union shop means workers must join the union and maintenance of membership means all members must stay in the union.)

In order to win the right to ask the employer for union shop, a majority of all workers in the bargaining unit must have voted in favor, not just a majority of union members, nor a majority of those who vote.

(If Congressmen had to be elected by a majority of those eligible to vote, Taft would not be in the Senate, nor would Hartley grace the House of Representatives.)

After such a vote is won, the workers do not get a union shop, they merely get the right to ask for it.

In addition, a Taft-Hartley act union shop must have a probationary period of at least 30 days; can be enforced only for failure to pay dues—even the worst union disrupter could not be thrown out; and permission to have a union shop might last only a few months.

The same applies to maintenance of membership.

It would be completely impossible to get union security through this NLRB procedure in any reasonable period of time. There are between 50,000 and 100,000 union security contracts in the United States. The old NLRB never ran more than 8,000 elections in a year, and that's before employers were allowed to swamp the Board with cases.

So the Taft-Hartley Act does not rule out union shop—nothing as crude as that—just sets up a five to ten year procedure for the unions to flounder around in. But we are not going to fall into the trap.

How Are We Going to Build Union Shops?

All Union Security clauses negotiated before June 23 are in the clear for the life of the contract. All such clauses negotiated before August 23rd are good up to a year. What do we do when present contracts expire, after August 23rd?

In no case are we going to the NLRB for union security elections. If the labor movement had fallen for this bait, we would have chased fire flies down an endless lane of stalling and waiting, while the union went to pot.

The Taft-Hartley Act went into full legal effect August 22. It is too early yet for any court tests to have taken place. In the meantime, all unions must fight the act and its interpretation by the new National Labor Relations Board. The best way to fight is to know your enemy, inside out. This article, second of two, is intended to help you plan your campaign to protect labor's hardwon rights in your local and in your shop. It will be supplemented by further studies of the act from the National Office of FTA. Watch for them.

We are going to make union shops through a steward system and unified membership which doesn't sleep or eat as long as a single worker is out of the union. It won't be the first time trade unionists have made their own union shops. (Discuss plans for carrying out the job in your plant—combine it with the question of checkoff authorizations, below.)

Why Are We Going to Boycott the NLRB?

We used to be able to get redress of unfair labor practices from the NLRB, and the Board provided fair elections for collective bargaining rights.

But the Taft-Hartley Act has so rigged the NLRB that for a union to take cases to it only invites this employer-Board to engage in union-busting.

Under the act, we are also invited to go to the Board to get authorization to ask for Union Security, which is just another bid to crawl into the union-busting web.

We have already discussed how this union-busting works out in each of these three cases.

The labor movement has decided not to go to the Board, but to boycott, or "by-pass" it. We have a perfect right to do this. There is nothing which forces us to bring these cases to the NLRB. (Unions will of course be dragged into the Board by employers, using their newly-acquired rights to charge unions with unfair practices. In these cases, we will have to go.)

The decision in CIO was left up to each individual union. Steel, Electrical Workers, Auto Workers, FTA, Packinghouse, Office and Professional, Mine, Mill and Smelter, Furniture, Shoe and Rubber are among those who have already decided to boycott the NLRB. As soon as most of the 41 unions have made their decision, CIO National Executive Board will decide overall CIO policy.

AFL General Counsel Padway advised AFL unions not to sign the affidavits. Following are some of the AFL unions which have already announced that they will by-pass the NLRB: Carpenters, Painters and Paperhangers, Tool and Die Workers, Typographers, Printing Pressmen, Plumbers, Blacksmiths, and Metal Polishers.

* * *

FTA's decision was made at the July Executive Board meeting and National Policy Conference, and the Resolutions establishing FTA policy were sent to all locals on July 28, urging thorough study in the locals. All locals are completely bound by this decision, because no local can individually decide to try to use the NLRB in a special case, without involving the National Union and the CIO. Records and affidavits must be turned in all down the line before a Local could bring an NLRB case.

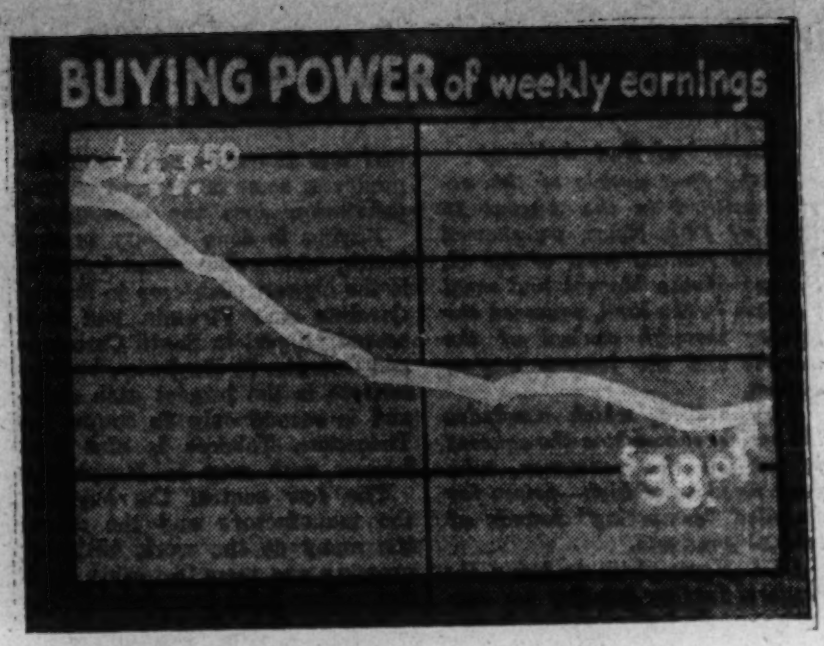
How is Checkoff Affected by the Act?

Checkoffs negotiated before June 23 stand as they are to July 1, 1948—unless the contract itself runs out before then. But after that, and for all contracts negotiated from now on, a checkoff must be signed individually. A member must have the right to revoke it (take it back) after one year or when the contract runs out, whichever is sooner.

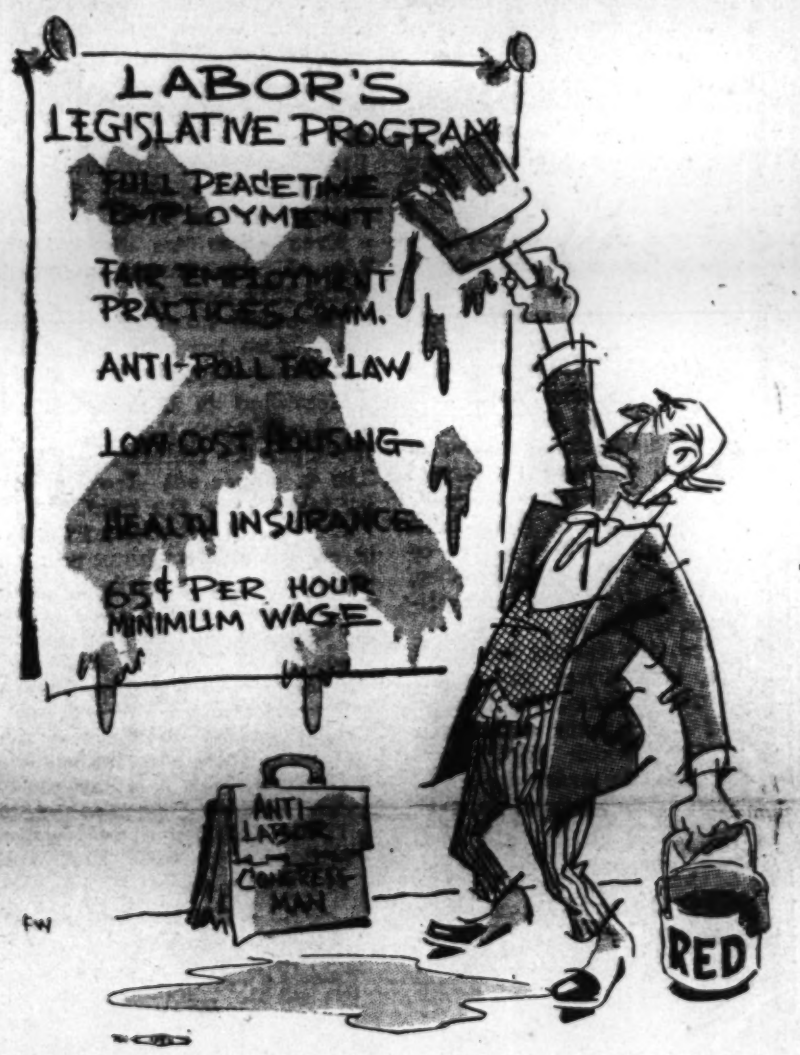
Checkoff applies to "membership dues." The recent miners' contract called for checkoff of all payments to the union, including initiations, fines, assessments, etc. —and Taft stated that this was within the meaning of "membership dues."

Penalty for breaking the checkoff provision of the Act is "not more than $10,000 fine or one year in jail, or both."

Where there are stricter state laws on union security, the Taft-Hartley act provides that the state laws will apply. But nothing is said in the Taft-Hartley act about stricter state laws on checkoff, so we can assume that the Taft-Hartley act comes ahead of state laws, following the usual rule that when Federal and State laws conflict, the Federal law rules. If employers covered by the Taft-Hartley act ask for compliance with even stricter state laws on checkoff, we will therefore oppose such an interpretation.



U. S. Government figures show that the buying power of weekly wages dropped from $47.50 to $38.04 between 1945 and 1946. Steep rise in living costs touched off when GOP-polltax Democrats controlled Congress first wrecked price controls a year ago July. What it means is this: if you got $47.50 a week last year, you're working now as hard (or harder, due to speedup) for $10.00 a week less.



How Will this Affect the Job of Stewards?

As soon as present automatic checkoff contracts expire, stewards will be up to their ears in getting authorization cards signed—providing the company agrees to this provision in the new contract.

Should the local be unable to negotiate any form of checkoff, the stewards will of course be involved in dues collection. This can also happen temporarily for several months until negotiations are completed. Several FTA locals have met this situation recently with flying colors, in all cases hitting higher dues collections than they had had under checkoff. **The stewards won the backing of the membership who took pride in strengthening their union.**

The provision of the Taft-Hartley Act which throws the door wide open to damage suits against unions may turn out to be one of the employer weapons in the act which will affect unions most seriously. If a stoppage or strike occurs which might be interpreted as violation of a no-strike clause in a contract, both the local and national union treasuries might be drained by a lawsuit.

This section of the act is already in effect, and to protect ourselves, it is essential, first of all, that no strike or stoppage of any sort take place in an FTA plant before consultation with the National Union.

Facts on this and a number of other points in the Taft-Hartley Act not covered above are included in "21 Questions and Answers" which has been sent to all FTA locals, to use as a discussion guide in Executive Board, Stewards Council and Membership meetings. The locals also have memorandums from the national office explaining in detail the technicalities of the act, and FTA policy.

Tobacco—The Almost 'Perfect' Monopoly

(Second of Two Articles)

In the first article of this series, printed in the August 15 issue of FTA News, we showed how the tobacco trust of the U. S., one of the biggest and most ruthless in the land, squeezed the farmer through control of the market and the tobacco buying system.

This article, which concludes the series, shows how the squeeze is put on the consumer, who pays fixed—and high—prices for so-called "competing" brands of tobacco products.

FTA News plans to bring its readers further studies on monopoly control of essential industries in food, tobacco and fiber processing.

IT'S A SECRET

Now the grower, faced with a limited market at fixed prices set by the buyer, is pretty well boxed in—but the Big Three have still more tricks up their monopoly sleeve.

Not only do they rig the market and fix prices, but they also run the auction in such a way that the farmer does not know what price he is getting until the deal is over.

Millions of radio listeners have heard the "chant of the tobacco auctioneer" of a Sunday evening. Perhaps some have idly wondered what the queer jargon meant. To a tobacco grower, the "chant" is no idle matter. It holds the key to economic security or insecurity—and he is not allowed to know the secret words and signs the auctioneer and the buyers use. The chant is almost as much a secret to him as it is to the radio listener, but with a difference—his livelihood depends on it.

In brief, the farmer has little idea of how prices are going during the auction. He has no idea of the minute differences in grading which Big Three buyers use in order to avoid competing with each other over identical tobacco.

And if he wants to reject a bid, he has to do so within 30 minutes of the final bid and then face the problem of getting his leaf back into the crowded warehouse for resale. There he meets the same squeeze plays again—the fixed prices, the short auction conducted in a secret jargon, the grading methods—all loaded against him.

As the Commissioner of Agriculture for Kentucky said at the 1940 trial in a minor masterpiece of understatement: "The farmer is devoid of bargaining power."

THE MANY AND THE FEW

Tobacco is grown in many parts of the United States, with approximately 500,000 farms in tobacco and 3,500,000 farm people dependent on the crop. As the U. S. Dept. of Justice put it in the brief before the District Court:

"The tobacco industry in the U. S. is characterized by diffusion in the growing of leaf tobacco and the retail distribution of tobacco products, contrasted with a high degree of concentration in the purchasing of leaf and the manufacture of tobacco products."

The trust does the buying of leaf and the manufacture of its products; some 52 percent of the population does the consuming.

Buying is done mainly in the South, where flue cured tobacco is the biggest cash crop in North Carolina and Virginia and the second biggest in South Carolina and Georgia. In Kentucky, burley tobacco is the largest cash crop and is second only to cotton in Tennessee. Tobacco is also the largest cash crop in Maryland.

The few control the buying, the manufacture and the sale; the many do the work, both in growing and manufacturing, and the nation does the consuming.

How do they all make out?

For every dollar spent by consumers on tobacco, the grower got 11.6c (1939 census), while the trust got 25.2c—better than twice as much.

This contrasts with the consumer dollar spent on food, where the farmer got 39c as his share in the same year—more than three times the share the tobacco grower received.

Another example is the trustified meat industry, where the livestock grower got 51c of the consumers meat dollar in 1939, and the packers 14.9c.

Even when we discount the 36c of the consumers tobacco dollar that goes to Federal and state excise taxes, we see that the tobacco trust—primarily the Big Three—kept the lion's share.

According to the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, the workers in the cigarette factories got only 2.5c in wages out of every dollar taken in by the trust.

A fairer distribution of the tobacco dollar would bring millions of dollars every year to the people who do the work—the growers and the tobacco workers. It would add millions of dollars of purchasing power to the people who need it most—the growers and the workers—in areas of the country where it is needed most.

A break in the trust's monopoly grip would also help the consumers, who today pay monopoly prices under the slogan of "free enterprise."

THE CONSUMER

This is how the trust keeps its iron hand on consumers, according to the U. S. Government's indictment of the Big Three:

1. List prices charged and discounts allowed to jobbers and favorite dealers have been kept identical since 1927.

2. Even when one of the Big Three raised its price before another, a dealer could not shift to the lower price brand because the other two would not fill his order until their own prices went up.

The dealer (and through him the consumer) found himself in the same squeeze as the farmer. He bought his tobacco products at the price and on the terms dictated by the trust.

The trust was able to do the "impossible" in the depth of the depression year 1931, when all tobacco products were raised in price at the same time. This little trick enabled the Big Three to show their biggest profit in previous history in 1932—the year of Hoovervilles and apples on every street corner.

In 1933 there appeared a small threat to the trust in the form of the 10c package of cigarettes. The threat was quickly disposed of, by two comparatively simple means.

First, the trust acted to keep raw material away from the cheaper brand makers, by outbidding them in the leaf markets for the lower grades of tobacco used in the 10c brands. This they did though they had no intention of using the tobacco themselves.

Second, the trust forced its distributors to maintain a standard price differential between their brands and the cheaper brands. This was done at the expense of the dealers, who were soon discouraged from pushing the lower-priced product.

GUILTY

Thus farmer, distributor and consumer alike are cheated and gouged by the tobacco trust, led by the Big Three and followed by all the major tobacco companies.

The trust was found guilty on all counts, and the verdict upheld by the U. S. Supreme Court after six years of litigation.

The total fine against the three amounted to $255,000. They were ordered to cease and desist all practices in violation of the Sherman anti-Trust Act.

The fines have been paid, out of Big Three profits of $129,000,000 in 1946. They did not make much difference in the Big Tree's net worth of $630,000,000 or total assets of $1,281,000,000. They could pay such a fine once a day for a year and still have plenty left.

So far, the companies have shown little inclination to loose their monopoly grip on tobacco. Replying to a question of June, 1946, from the Monopoly subCommittee of the House Committee on Small Business, the Justice Department said on the question of compliance:

"The decision of the Supreme Court sustaining the convictions of the leading companies in the tobacco industry, and their principal officers, means that their operations, as conducted prior to the institution of the prosecution, were illegal and must be changed.

"If appropriate changes are not initiated by the companies involved, the Government will again take the initiative to bring about conditions in the industry that will be in harmony with law."

To which the subCommittee added its comment: **"It is doubtful that this criminal action will change the high degree of concentration already existing in the industry and affect the preponderent economic power enjoyed by them. The Justice Department in their answer recognizes this and indicates that it is presently considering the advisability of taking civil action."**

In the meantime, a new tobacco season is under way and farmer and growers alike are still in the grip of the "perfect" monopoly.

What can workers and consumers do to rid themselves of monopoly's stranglehold? Workers can—and do—fight for better wages and conditions through their unions. FTA-CIO fights for a decent living and security for all tobacco workers, has won hundreds of contracts improving the lot of thousands of tobacco workers.

Together with farmers, workers can fight to break the tight-fisted control of marketing. FTA has worked with tobacco growers and other farmers to see that they get a more nearly fair return for their labor and investment. Together with consumers, workers can fight for an end to price hi-jacking, for curbs on monopoly control of outlets.

The main job is a political one—to end monopoly control of vital American industry by "nationalization of the trusts that now exploit workers, farmers and consumers alike." (FTA Policy statement, July 15, 1947.)

(For further discussion of the monopoly problem, see the next issue of FTA News.)

UNDERSTANDING ALL THOSE CHARTS AND FIGURES IS YOUR MONOPOLY, PROFESSOR. IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO MAKE A LIVING.
THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE ABOUT— THE KIND OF LIVING YOU ARE ALLOWED TO MAKE
CARTELS
MERGERS
Early morning—
I'M HERE ON THE TERMS SET BY THE DAIRY MONOPOLY— NOT TO MENTION THE BOTTLE MONOPOLY
THE INTERNATIONAL MATCH CARTEL HAS BURNED UP BIG BANKS AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES
THIS COUNTRY WILL NEVER GET A 5¢ CIGAR (OR 10¢ CIGARETS) IF THE TOBACCO MONOPOLY CAN PREVENT IT!
Off to work—
ELECTRICAL MONOPOLY
CHEMICAL MONOPOLY
STEEL MONOPOLY
ALUMINUM MONOPOLY
Homeward bound—
CINEMA
TONITE'S FEATURE: WHATEVER A FEW PRODUCERS WILL LET US SHOW YOU
A quiet evening at home—
NO WONDER I CAN ONLY GET FULTON LEWIS, JR.!
PATENT LICENSES
CROSS LICENSES
AGREEMENTS
POOLS
YOU ARE READING BY AGREEMENT OF THE MONOPOLY ON SPECTACLES
PAPER AT PRICES SET BY THE NEWSPRINT MONOPOLY
INK MONOPOLY
NEWS FROM PRESS ASSOCIATION MONOPOLY
The Daily Blast
YOU'LL GET US IF, AS AND WHEN MONOPOLY DECIDES!
TELEVISION
THE MARCH OF SCIENCE

Tobacco is only one of a network of monopoly trusts that exploits U. S. workers, farmers and all consumers alike. Pictures (right) from CIO Economic Outlook show how monopoly affects your daily needs—from milk to matches, tobacco to television, radio to reading.